

Sweden as a Rooseveltian Model

With the Welfare of Worker Its Watchword, the Respect for and Maintenance of Individual Rights to Freedom and Well-Being Are Basis of State's Socializing Process

By HENRY ALBERT PHILLIPS

[This is the first of two articles by Henry Albert Phillips. The present one deals with social and economic progress in industrial Sweden; and the second, to appear shortly, treats of Kiruna, a mining town which the author calls a "workman's paradise in farthest Lapland."

The opinions expressed in these articles are solely those of the author, who has written from first-hand observation. — The Editor.]



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The city of Gothenburg, Sweden, seen through an archway

BEGINNING with his earliest campaign speeches President

Roosevelt boldly turned the prow of the ship of government toward the open Sea of State Socialism. "Socialism," as a term, being tabu in this capitalistic democracy, has been veiled under such phrases as "the greatest good to the greatest number," "raising the standard of living and of wages of all workers—if necessary from the excessive profits of employers," "providing a self-respecting mode of life for every woman, man and child!" etc. In other words, private profit of individual or corporation is no longer to stand in the way of the ultimate welfare of the lowliest worker.

Monarchy Remains Undisturbed

Sweden to-day offers perhaps the best example of, and more nearly approximates, those ideals which the Roosevelt Administration promised, and is striving to attain. Sweden, too, because its huge industrial problems compare in magnitude with those that confront America, is a fair parallel.

Sweden is in more than one way an ideal State for a great social experiment. For more than a hundred years the country has not been involved in a single war. This absence for so long of any violent disturbance of its social and economic conditions, and of any embarrassing international relations, found it with an even temper peculiarly fitted to undertake a social departure many decades ago that Americans are now considering "new" and dangerous.

For in character the Swedes are a cool, serious-thinking, highly-literate, homogeneous folk. While, in theory, at least, a "revo-

lution" took place, the issues were reasoned out in debate rather than in bomb-throwing. Throughout all the extreme socializing processes the monarchy and its institutions were scarcely disturbed.

As the triumph of industrialism progressed in Sweden, the problems of socialization became more and more complex. In 1870, the hardy open-air agrarian population embraced three-fourths of the Swedish nation, while the manufacturing group was then only one-eighth. By 1900, the agriculturists had shrunk to about one-half, and industry had expanded to one-quarter of the whole. In 1920, agriculture occupied less than one-half the population, while industry claimed one-half. The migration to and the congestion in the cities was in full swing.

Dangerous occupations, confining indoor jobs, overlong hours for men, women, and children with occupational diseases early began to threaten the health, peace, and happiness of half the people. To-day, however, after forty years or more of facing their problems of industrialization by forcing immediate solutions of them, the Swedes are able to say proudly what few other nations on the face of the globe can say with equal truth: "We have no slums!" There is no child labor; there are no sweat-shops.

Welfare of the worker has become the watchword of Sweden. There is a Ministry of Social Affairs in perfect operation. It not only includes certain functions that are ordinarily assigned to a Ministry of the Interior, but also has the broadest powers in many branches of social administration.

standard of living must be maintained at all costs. It had become one of the first duties of the State.

The present Socialist Government has been faced by unprecedented demands for funds to support its extravagant program. To face this crisis, it has just borrowed 550,000,000 Swedish crowns (\$249,567,000). With no extraordinary means of repayment in sight, it promises that this debt, and possibly others for similar projects, shall be paid by an increased inheritance tax. It says that the well-to-do must some day pay back these sums.

Unanimity Among All Classes

A journey through Sweden soon discloses a solid unanimity among the Swedes of all classes. There is a stubborn pride on the part of every community, among rich and poor, great and small, each in pointing out its numerous institutions of welfare.

The Old People's Home in Rättvik, for example, is the best-looking house in the town. All semblance of an "institution" has been avoided, and it has the outward appearance of a large, prosperous residence surrounded by beautiful flower-gardens and a vine-clad veranda where the guests are sitting about in easy wicker chairs.

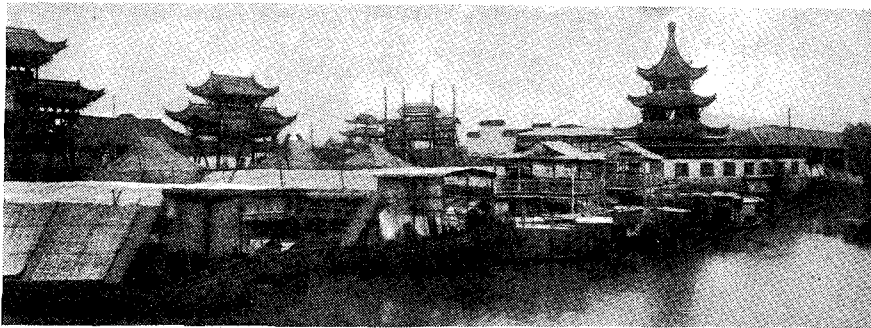
Again, in Gothenburg, our cicerone happened to be a scion of a wealthy noble family engaged in "commerce." He remarked: "This sort of thing takes 60 per cent. of our taxes—keeping these people not only comfortable, but in luxury." He smiled as he said it, adding: "We are a clever people to do a thing like that."

State support is assured to every Swede from birth to death: Insurance at every turn—at the expense of the employer. Homes at every untoward cross-road in life: for the aged, the sick, the mentally backward or broken, the disabled, the wayward, the indigent, the orphans—at the expense of the State. Not only was State support promised, but it has become obligatory by law. If the State happened at the moment to be without funds, then it became its first duty to borrow such money as was necessary to be repaid out of increased taxes. The high

Nanking's Coolies and Their Companions

Toiling or Singing, There Is Much That Is Picturesque and Wholesome About the Orient's Men of All Work, and Their Retinue of Children, Dogs, and Impudent Geese

By EDWARD PRICE BELL



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Flower boats on the canal at Nanking, China

STRICTLY speaking, of course, they are *not* my coolies. They are just the coolies, a swarming lot, who toil, sweat, prattle, shout, and sing—and sometimes hotly dispute—in the blazing Nanking August sun beneath my windows (three stories up) in a squatty, rugged, towered, graystone hotel on the east bank of the wide Yangtze, which flows from north to south at this point. I call them my coolies because they have become so familiar to me, by day and by night (their weird cries and music are seldom still on these sweltering nights), and because, despite their unholy clatter, I can not help liking them.

Not much clothing impedes their multiplex activities. Their arms and torsos and legs are bare, thin, hard, sinewy, and sun-burned to almost a pure black. Only a few of them wear hats; the majority take the terrible rays of the unclouded sun full on their shaved heads. Women and girls, clad in blue or black cotton blouses and trousers, mingle with the men, supplying rice soup, fish, and occasional treats of flour gravy. Children play about among the workers, the smaller ones in their brown-to-black birthday suits, the larger ones with babies strapped to their backs.

The Junks and the Coolies

It is a paved square, about the size of a city block, on which these coolies work. It lies between the hotel and a muddy creek flowing under an upcurved bridge which carries the traffic of the new Chung Shan Road, one of the great thoroughfares of Nanking.

This stream flows southward to the Yangtze and so connects itself with the productive labor of a large area of Central China. It is thronged with small freight-craft, especially junks, those odd high-pooped, prominent-stemmed, full-sterned, lug-sailed vessels which confront one on all the waters of this teeming country, and nearly every specimen of which looks as tho it had been unremittingly in use for the 4,000 years of Chinese history.

There is an indissoluble intimacy between these junks and the coolies. The junks plow up the muddy creek from the Yangtze with prodigious loads of straw for



Gateway to the Nanking Municipal Government

shack-building and roof-thatching, hay for Army horses, and fire-wood for the homes of Nanking. The coolies unload these great cargoes, baling the straw and hay and splitting the wood into small pieces, which afterward they fasten in bundles to be carried over the city in rickshaws. These two-wheeled carriages are lined up by the score beneath my windows, fringing two sides of the paved square, their steel-muscle pullers, half-naked, waiting patiently between the shafts for their burdens, while the sun beats pitilessly on their bare scalps. These rickshaw-pullers are some of my coolies' companions when it is playtime.

Watch two of these coolies starting off the deck of a junk with a back-breaking load of wood swung in a looped rope made fast to a pole resting on their bare shoulders as they stand tandem. Steady! Even *their* strong, straight legs seem to bend under the burden. The man in front utters a peculiar cry, half a wail, the other echoes it, and they move toward the shore, with every step that strange cry and its sure echo, a kind of supporting rhythm without which apparently they could not proceed. The wailing does not cease—it gathers loudness and

power, indeed—until, with a skilful, synchronized movement, the two men slip from under their load, and drop it at its appointed place on the paved square. Then silence.

There are hundreds of these men and hundreds of these cries, hour after hour, from the first streak of dawn till it is too dark to see, some carrying wood, some straw, some hay. It is a camped community, this community of my coolies. Its semicircular straw huts lie in clusters close to the muddy water. That is where, with their families, they sleep, *when* they sleep. As the sun sinks across the Yangtze, the coolies squat with their women and children on straw mats or the bare concrete, and enjoy a social hour or so eating.

The Impudent Coolie Geese

Now a few words about my coolies' companions, about the hangers-on, so to speak, of the restless, vociferous camp. There are the dogs. Never, elsewhere, have I seen dogs of so many colors, sizes, and kinds of vocal vigor. Snap and growl and bark and howl; they fill the vacancy when their masters are asleep. One often observes them barking indefatigably at nothing. I suppose it is the natural canine reaction to the habitual hubbub and uproar of the camp.

And the geese! Did not geese once save Rome by the din they made? I think I remember something like that, and I can understand the story now. These coolie geese have an impudence which I never have seen in any other bird.

You probably think that is all, but it is not; a book might be written about my coolies and their companions; many books have been written about people and things less wholesome and less interesting.



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Coolies at Woosung, China, carrying a heavy slab of stone